cost escalation. After examination of the Revised Cost Estimate (RCE), the Government of Gujarat has been repeatedly requested to submit a complete, comprehensive and final RCE.

Relief to farmers under Debt Relief Scheme who had settled their dues

1516. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the status of debt relief to the farmers announced by the Union Government;

(b) for Kerala, debt relief were given during the months of January to March 2008, those who have taken loan from the Co-operative Banks and become over due and so, whether Government intended to give the benefits to the farmers who have already settled their dues during this period on One Time Settlement; and

(c) if not, what are the measures being taken to give relief to such farmers also?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Research and Development in Agriculture

1517. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of Agricultural Research and Development in the country as compared to other development Countries;

(b) the details of steps taken to accelerate the research and Development activities to increase productivity and quality of agricultural products in view of the growing population of the country;

(c) whether Government has signed any agreement with other countries for mutual co-operation in agricultural research; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) India has positioned herself well in as far as agricultural research and development is concerned. The agricultural research and development in the country has received a boost in the XIth Plan with an increased Plan Outlay of Rs. 12023 crores as compared to Rs.5368 crores during Xth Plan. Though India is spending only 0.34 percent of agricultural GDF in agricultural R&D as compared to 0.72 percent in sub-Sahara Africa and 0.40 percent in China, Indian agriculture research and development has excelled in various spheres of biotechnology and molecular biology research leading to enhanced agriculture production and productivity as is evident from the fact that India has achieved self-sustainence as far as food production is concerned.

(b) Following major initiatives have been taken up:-

1. National Agricultural Innovation Project has been initiated to reform agricultural R&D, strengthen value chain, improve livelihood security in the backward districts of India and conduct basic and strategic research involving private entrepreneurs, NGOs, farmers organizations as partners.

2. A mega program on quality seed production has been launched for distribution of the improved varieties developed through R&D to farmers and other stake holders.

3. A network program on 'climate change' has been launched for better understanding of the changing climate phenomenon and to develop mitigation and adaptation strategies for lowering the impact of climate stress on agricultural production and productivity.

4. A new national institute on abiotic stress has been set up. It has also been decided to set up a national institute of biotic stress and national institute of agricultural biotechnology.

5. Several new programmes on mitigation of greenhouse gases, nano technology, bioprospecting and allele mining for abiotic stress, value addition of agricultural produce, quality and safety of products have been initiated in the XIth Plan in a network mode of participation using conventional and molecular approaches to enhance agricultural productivity.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) At present, we are having a total of 38 agreements with different countries/organizations. The detailed list is given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).

Statement

MOUs / Work Plans at a Glance

Sl. No.	Institutions involved
1	2
1.	ICAR and University of Saskatchewan, Canada
2.	ICAR and Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences (RAAS), Moscow, Russia
3.	ICAR and the University of Western Australia
4.	M/o Agriculture, India and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Cattle, Fishing and Food, Republic of Argentina
5.	ICAR and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), China
6.	ICAR and INIA (Institute De Investgaaones Agropewovias), Chile
7.	M/o Agriculture, India and M/o Agriculture & Fisheries, Sultanate of Oman
8.	ICAR and the Iowa State University, Iowa, U.S.A.

1	2
9.	Govt. of India through DoAC in the M/o Agriculture, and Govt of Sudan
10.	ICAR and France (CIRAD/ INRA)
11.	ICAR and the Ohio State University, Ohio, U.S.A.
12.	DARE in the M/o Agriculture, India and in the M/o Agriculture, India and Iran
13.	ICAR (on behalf of the GoI) and the M/o Scienece, Technology & Environment, Cuba
14.	DARE in the M/o Agriculture, India and Uzbekistan
15.	M/o Agriculture, India and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, Socialist Republic of Vietnam
16.	ICAR and Uganda (NARO)
17.	ICAR-NARC, Nepal
18.	ICAR-BARC, Bangladesh
19.	ICAR-CARP Sri Lanka
20.	DARE-Ecuador
21.	ICAR-Cornell University, USA
22.	ICAR-ARC, Egypt
23.	ICAR-EMBRAPA, Brazil
24.	Eritrea-DARE
25.	ICAR-Horticulture and Food Research Institute Ltd., Palmerston North, New Zealand
26.	DARE-Afghanistan
27.	DARE-Burkina Faso
28.	DoAC-Kenya, ICIPE
29.	DARE- Liberia
30.	DARE-Namibia
31.	ICAR-International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOID), Nepal
32.	ICAR-Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC), Pakistan
33.	DARE-Panama
34.	DARE-Trinidad & Tobago

1	2
35.	GoI in DoAC- Tunisia
36.	GoI in the DoAC- USDA, USA
37.	GoI in the DoAC- USDA, USA
38.	GoI, M/o Agriculture (in DoAC)- M/o Agriculture, Mozambique

Price rise of egg and chicken

1518. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the price of poultry feed have increased from the last year;

(b) if so, whether it has resulted in sharp increase in the price of egg and chicken;

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to bring down the prices of poultry feed; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir. The cost of poultry feed, has increased from last year during this period (June-July) as per available information.

(b) No such studies have been done attributing increase in poultry feed price to increase in price of egg and chicken. As per industry data of various centers, the prices of chicken and eggs have increased during the period.

(c) and (d) In order to increase the availability of major poultry feed ingredient maize and containing its prices in the domestic market, Government banned its export in 2008 from early July till mid-October, which discouraged hoarding by traders. The Government also facilitates information dissemination regarding availability of damaged grains from Food Corporation of India (FCI) for uptake, often at subsidized prices, to poultry industry. As a long-term measure, Technology Mission on Oilseeds and Pulses is focusing towards increasing yield and quality of maize and oilseeds.

Decline in the production of rice

1519. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production of rice in the country has fallen below the target in the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government has taken measures to boost production of rice to meet the growing demand?